



CHAMPIONING DIVERSITY

Opportunities for the European Foundation Sector



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A publication by the EFC Diversity, Migration and Integration Interest Group (DMIIG)
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FOREWORD



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The European Foundation Centre’s Diversity, Migration and Integration Interest Group (DMIIG) was launched in 2006, as the result of a merger between the Migration Interest Group and the Minorities and the Multiculturalism Interest Group. The DMIIG is therefore the focal point of the EFC’s initiatives related to diversity, migration and migrant integration. Among these crucial issues for Europe’s future, the questions of diversity and equality which address the under-representation of migrants and people from ethnic minorities in the public and civil society sectors can be seen as both an opportunity and a challenge for our philanthropic organisations.

This publication, focused on what foundations should be doing in order to implement affirmative policies that actively foster in-house diversity or address diversity in grant-making, underlines the level of commitment of the EFC to the necessary efforts towards the mainstreaming of migrants and people from ethnic minorities within foundations’ work. By pointing out examples and best practices from different foundations in Europe, the DMIIG understands that individual foundations and the EFC can lead by example, as case studies in this work underline, and encourages partner organisations to multiply their efforts in the field, for example through pilot projects or other initiatives.

The EFC welcomes this contribution which is an important first step to raising awareness about diversity and surely will be part of a long term process of development and change.

EMÍLIO RUI VILAR

Chair, European Foundation Centre
 President of the Board of Trustees,
 Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian



INTRODUCTION

Last year's pictures of the new Spanish Defence Minister visiting troops in Afghanistan hit the headlines. Foreign policy concerns were momentarily overshadowed by coverage of Carme Chacón's pre-natal bump. Her appointment as Spain's first female Minister of Defence was more than just a tokenistic gesture. It was the latest in a series of encouraging reforms which have transformed the image of the country.

Throughout Europe, a similar trend can be observed. Governments, businesses, the corporate world and voluntary organisations increasingly reflect the societies within which they operate. What's important is that the changing face of these sectors is not merely a sop to the politically correct. It is a pragmatic response to the continent's increasing plurality - and it is crucial that foundations do not get left behind.

For this reason, the European Foundation Centre's Diversity, Migration and Integration Interest Group (DMIG) has launched this publication. At its heart is the conviction that embracing diversity is not only the right thing to do but can also bring a wide variety of benefits.

It also represents the future. Recent demographic

shifts throughout Europe have transformed the continent. For example, a UK study released just before President Obama's inauguration revealed that one in five British children belongs to an ethnic minority.¹ This trend shows little sign of abating.

Therefore in the corporate world, diversity makes good business sense. As globalisation demands greater flexibility and constant innovation, companies cannot afford to be self-limiting. Diversity is a way to reach new markets, customers and talent.

In the same way, by casting its recruitment net a bit wider, a foundation can gain access to a larger talent pool and broader skills base. It can also become an employer of choice and a grant-maker responsive to the needs of the community it serves.

Sounds appealing but ambitious? It doesn't have to be. It's not an exact science - DMIG cannot provide you with a list of instructions to transform your organisation into a model of diversity overnight. And we are aware that the workings of some foundations may be shaped by their internal rules: in some cases staff must be from a specific nationality or religion. However, "Championing Diversity" should be seen as the starting point for a timely discussion within the sector.

Many foundations have already started to tackle the subject in different ways. This publication provides examples of the challenges and benefits experienced in order to make the 'business case' for diversity.

There are challenges. At Barrow Cadbury - where our employees do broadly reflect the UK's notable array of ethnicities, religions and backgrounds - we grapple with the issue of representation. For example, we have realised that it's not enough to recruit more widely and assume that everything will fall into place. Similarly, we acknowledge that hiring someone from a particular under-represented group will not necessarily imbue an organisation with some kind of alchemical knowledge of this group.

At the Barrow Cadbury Trust our approach has been to question ourselves and our often firmly-held assumptions constantly. How can we avoid tokenism? Is our organisation truly representative of the society within which we work? How can we ensure that we understand the needs of the grassroots organisations we support? Underlying this process is the tenet that paying lip-service to diversity can be as damaging as ignoring it.

This is why leadership is crucial. Without it, any

changes may exist only on paper. The impetus to take a critical internal look at one's own organisation can come from any level. However, ultimately, trustees, chief executives and senior staff must be committed to asking difficult questions.

Finding answers to these questions is unlikely to be easy, but foundations can learn from collective experiences rather than tackling them individually. In this way "Championing Diversity" aims to make the learning curve less steep.

And if we do not find creative ways to adjust to the shifting realities of our increasingly heterogeneous continent, the risk to the philanthropic sector is more than reputational. It means that foundations will lose out on a whole range of benefits and opportunities. Just as the Spanish Ministry of Defence is undoubtedly discovering, embracing diversity in the workplace will involve more than just appointing a pregnant woman and establishing a crèche, but small steps may lead us in the direction of new and exciting destinations.

AYESHA SARAN
Barrow Cadbury Trust

¹ *Ethnicity and the Family: relationships within and between ethnic groups*, Lucinda Platt (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 19 January 2009).



FRAMING THE ISSUES

European philanthropy is thriving. It gets bigger, more complex and increasingly engaged every year, the current economic downturn notwithstanding. And as new trends in the sector such as venture philanthropy, philanthro-capitalism¹ and others are being hotly debated, simultaneously conversations on the future of integration and immigration continue to challenge European societies. In this climate, can we - a disparate group of individual foundation professionals from across the continent - create a viable European voluntary paradigm, embracing talent and championing diversity while remaining respectful of individual freedoms and choice?

Our philanthropic world is multi-faceted, a varied group of institutions born of quite different circumstances without a common model or experience. Nevertheless there are many similar elements across the board. This publication highlights a number of examples of innovative experiments in the area of diversity undertaken by individual foundations, which are to be commended and celebrated. While they are not necessarily representative, their experiences are shared by many.

These inspirational stories exist alongside certain realities on the ground over which one might express less enthusiasm. While both European societies at large and the foundation sector in particular may be at a critical turning point regarding race and ethnicity,

very few institutions are being held accountable at the top levels on this issue.

This publication aims to be a catalyst for change. Appearing at a watershed moment in world history on the heels of Barack Obama's election to the U.S. Presidency - which is already proving to have transatlantic ripple effects - this publication is an initial effort of a group of European foundations to address the implications for the sector of the growing rise in ethnic diversity across the continent. Everywhere questions of equality, race and ethnicity are being raised afresh. And everywhere policy makers, foundations and other representatives of civil society are seeking solutions and new directions.

The first collective step towards developing new tools to explore opportunities in this area began over a year ago, with the support of the Barrow Cadbury Trust who sponsored an initial consultation which I undertook on behalf of the Diversity, Migration and Integration Interest Group (DMIIG) of the European Foundation Centre (EFC) to interview over 15 prominent European foundation leaders. Our goal was to assess the level of interest in promoting diversity within the sector. Our point of departure was a belief that both staff composition and governance structures would greatly benefit from becoming more representative of the societies the foundations operate in. It was clear too that further

exploration in this area, for example proposing to develop new recruitment and training policies, could only be successfully promoted if they were presented exclusively on a voluntary basis.

Leaders were positive about exploring these challenging issues. Interviewees understood the necessity of getting this 'right' over time and were conscious of threats to their organisations. They were both pragmatic and seeking change. There was often an expression of enthusiasm for the concepts coupled with an element of a lack of awareness concerning the implications of this issue on their organisations. Some mentioned their concerns with potential compliance issues if the legal background shifted, while a handful spoke of a compelling moral need to engage in voluntary actions in favour of diversifying their own institutions.

As in the broader business world, there was in fact very little consensus that there might be an economic imperative to push for change in this area. Concern that mandatory quotas in hiring might eventually be part and parcel of the European legal landscape seemed to be a more powerful motivating factor. On the other hand, most were concerned with diversity of opinion or a range of opinions within their organisations, which they did not see as necessarily related to the composition of their boards or managerial workforce. In other words, many did not see diversification of their staff and boards as necessarily broadening their world view in a manner which will improve their capacity as funders.

This publication is the next phase of what is certain to be a long term work in progress. It is an attempt to demonstrate through positive examples how diversity can rhyme with quality. We will examine attempts to mainstream diversity within the foundations themselves, as well as diversity

as a theme for foundations in their grant giving. The case will be made in three areas: foundations as funders, foundations as employers, and foundations as community leaders contributing to the public good. We have consciously decided to focus on one dimension of diversity, namely the participation of ethnic minorities and those from a migrant background as we see them as being disproportionately impacted by historical legacies and discrimination. Structuring conversations around a single theme provided coherency. Therefore this work does not primarily address issues in relation to women and other groups who are often part of a broader 'diversity' agenda. Our hope is that there will be other opportunities to explore these critical issues elsewhere in the future.

EXPERIMENTS IN PROMISING PRACTICE

Our aim is to provide tools for foundations through illustrating promising practices, promoting learning, and demonstrating innovative attempts to encourage diversity. We identified foundations from a broad geographical cross section of the continent as well diverse sizes and types of organisations. While some are essentially run as small businesses, and others sizeable enterprises, all encountered different challenges and provided creative and sometimes uplifting solutions.

This publication does not attempt to provide indisputable data to address the objective reality in the field with statistical materials on the current status of diversity in foundations in Europe. Up until now there has been no attempt to develop statistics in this area.²

Foundations are both businesses in their own right as well as public organisations expected by many to play a leadership role in their own communities. As such, they are faced with specific and complex

¹ *Philanthro-capitalism: How the Rich can save the world*, Matthew Bishop & Michael Green (Bloomsbury Press, New York, 2008).

² Mindful of this, the EFC is embarking on a mission to promote diversity and inclusiveness in the sector by building a case for diversity. Among the activities foreseen is an initiative to gather data, supported by the American Express Foundation, aimed at addressing the information gap and providing an initial analysis of the current state of diversity in institutional philanthropy in Europe. Building on the basis of this information, as well as examples of good practice such as those compiled here, the EFC aims to increase awareness about the benefits of diversity within the foundation sector, exploring opportunities of how diversity can increase effectiveness in philanthropy.

issues of accountability. Given the history of family-led trusts or other unique challenges, many also have unusual constraints on their staffing and governance structures. This provides opportunities compelling foundations to think and act creatively about diversity. This publication highlights several innovative approaches to adapting restrictive rules, some of which developed as far back as the beginning of the 20th century, to contemporary realities.

We demonstrate that with creativity and good will much can be accomplished to develop positive change while continuing to honour and respect the wishes or mandates of initial donors. To these aims this publication is organised around five case studies, each of which has been selected to focus on a separate but complementary theme. Our goal is to demonstrate the many different and complex ways in which foundations have attempted to address the broad issue of diversity, both internally and externally.

THE WIDER LEGAL CONTEXT

Any initiative in this field of diversity necessarily develops as part of the wider economic and political context in which foundations operate. The legal environment is particularly significant and enshrined in two significant pieces of European Union legislation. One, known as the Racial Equality Directive (RED)³, implements the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin in such different fields of life as employment, social protection, education, and access to goods and services including housing. As mentioned in its article 1, the Directive aims to “lay down a framework for combating discrimination on the grounds of racial or ethnic origin, with a view to putting into effect in the Member States the principle of equal treatment”.⁴

A complex tool, the RED is intended to provide sanctions that are meant to be effective, dissuasive,

and proportionate. It provides rights for legal redress, legal standing for organisations supporting victims, as well as judicial and/or administrative processes to be available to victims of discrimination.

Secondly, there is the Employment Equality Directive⁵ which establishes a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation⁶, in order to tackle discrimination for grounds other than race and ethnicity. The purpose of this directive is to “lay down a general framework for combating discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation as regards employment and occupation”. These latter issues are particularly pertinent to our brief here.

Compliance with this legislation has been uneven. Its adoption into national law has varied according to a country’s legal tradition and its specific history in relation to the fight against racial discrimination. Countries like the Netherlands, Sweden, and the United Kingdom which have indeed had longer legal traditions in fighting racial discrimination with national legislation nevertheless joined many others in receiving each a reasoned opinion from the European Commission as to where they had been lacking in their implementation. Meanwhile, new member states from Central and Eastern Europe have faced different challenges. At the time of the Directive’s adoption they were still accession countries, but as this legislation became part of the *acquis communautaire*, they nevertheless had the duty to incorporate the RED into their national laws. This has been a significant task.

Shifts in the legal framework continue as the European Union institutions aim to impact positively in this area. As recently as June 2008, a new proposal was put forward by the European Commission which aims to implement the principle of equal treatment irrespective of religion

or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation outside the labour market, harmonising the level of protection against discrimination according to the standards previously set in the Racial Equality Directive.⁷

In less than a decade, EU member states have created national public bodies as required in the aforementioned legislation and, increasingly, these are being used by ordinary citizens to combat discrimination across the continent. Some countries have even opted to go beyond the protections outlined in the Directive, and many are experimenting with new techniques in this field.

THE BUSINESS CASE

Our consideration of diversity should not be restricted to observing the letter of the law on compliance per se. Indeed, a positive economic rationale for action in this field is clear: the relationship between diversity, innovation and productivity are as true in the foundation world as they are in the ‘regular’ business world. The same key benefits for foundations as economic actors come into play, and they should benefit from the same advantages that are available to all companies which successfully embark on diversifying their workforce.

In the business sector where more extensive research has been undertaken, a positive correlation between diversity and board performance has been established in a number of areas. Both gender and ethnic diversity play roles here: excellence in organisational performance is linked to diversity. Many different studies have demonstrated this. Recently, for example, the NGO Opportunity Now sponsored a study which indicated that ethnic diversity is positively linked with corporate performance.⁷ Furthermore, there is a positive correlation between diversity and employee satisfaction and engagement.⁸ The quality of a workforce is thus improved when the group is more diverse. In short, all economic indicators point towards the usefulness, if not the necessity of making progress in this area.

TOWARDS A EUROPEAN VOLUNTARY PARADIGM: WAYS FORWARD

European philanthropy is a far cry today from its origins when it was primarily made up of religious-based charities organised to alleviate human suffering. It has successfully adapted over many centuries. Today there is no single answer to the challenge which diversity poses. Every organisation can look at its own history and seek out a strategic response which is appropriate to its own needs. In many instances, simply opening a conversation at the senior staff and/or board level on these issues would already be a significant initiative. Other organisations are now ready to adopt internal policies which are likely to produce significant change. There is no single path which makes sense across the spectrum of foundation experience. The case studies which follow will illustrate that we are at a defining moment in the process of diversifying the foundation world and that many organisations are struggling to meet these challenges. All deserve kudos for their efforts.

Now is the time to think creatively, to devise pilot projects, to refocus resources, and make use of recently created services across the continent specialising in recruiting individuals from ethnic and minority backgrounds.⁹ There are many projects which could be launched. Perhaps one could create a European fellowship programme to assist in cultivating future philanthropic leaders from minority backgrounds.¹⁰ Many other creative opportunities also exist. Certainly it is always the right time to begin conversations between foundation executives and trustees which can help shift the foundation pendulum to its natural place, better reflecting the composition of the societies which they serve.

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³ Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000.

⁴ RED became a reality after a prolonged campaign which begun in the early 1990s by a broad network of NGOs, many of which were supported by foundations, and spearheaded by the “Starting Line Group”, see “The Starting Line Group: A harmonised approach to fight racism and to promote equal treatment”, Isabelle Chopin, *European Journal of Migration and Law* (Vol. 1 No. 1, 111-129, Kluwer Law International, The Netherlands, 1999).

⁵ Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000.

⁶ “with a view to putting into effect in the Member States the principle of equal treatment”.

⁷ *The Responsive Workplace: How to Survive and Thrive*, Opportunity Now (Business and the Community, February 2009 p.16).

⁸ Ibid, page 25.

⁹ See for example www.mozaiqrh.com, a French organisation dedicated to promoting the recruitment of ethnic minorities and individuals from disenfranchised areas.

¹⁰ Such as the programme sponsored by the San Francisco Community Foundation.

BRINGING RACIAL BALANCE TO THE BOARD

JOSEPH ROWNTREE CHARITABLE TRUST

The Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust (JRCT) was established in 1904 by its namesake, a prominent Quaker businessman, with a vision of promoting political equality, social justice and the creation of a peaceful world.

Based in York, United Kingdom, the Trust has 11 staff members and makes grants to a total of around 5.5 million pounds sterling (GBP) per year. Its programme areas cover peace, racial justice, power and responsibility, and Quaker concerns. Grants are predominantly made to organisations based in the Britain that work at a national level, but in addition the Trust supports a small number of associations and groups that are based elsewhere in Europe; it also funds projects in Ireland and the KwaZulu-Natal area of South Africa.

The Racial Justice programme promotes awareness within British and European communities of the need to protect the human rights of minority communities, asylum-seekers and migrants. It aims to tackle injustices where these are related to colour or culture - from challenging Islamophobia to finding ways to eliminate racial violence. JRCT also aims to empower ethnic minorities to engage in decision-making and policy development.

An in-depth and long term approach to problem-solving characterizes the JRCT philosophy which is based on a belief that poverty and inequality have to be tackled at their roots. If merely their 'superficial manifestations' are treated, then symptoms will be eased over time, but policies will make no lasting difference. This is the reason that the Trust has a deliberate strategy of placing itself at the 'cutting edge' of difficult and contentious issues.

The JRCT is governed by a board of voluntary trustees who set overall strategy and make grant decisions. They try to maintain an "adventurous approach to funding" which sometimes includes support for unpopular causes. Although the Trust Board make all final grant offers, much of the detailed work of the Trust is carried out through grant-making committees of four or five trustees with a particular interest in the specific area of work. Committees also co-opt non-trustee members who are able to bring "additional expertise and wisdom to decision-making". Trustees base their decision-making on the 'Quaker Business Method' which favours reaching a consensus.

For more information, see the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust website: www.jrct.org.uk

Quakers in Europe are overwhelmingly white. Therefore the requirement enshrined in the JRCT governing document that all its trustees be Quakers means that they have to think creatively about diversity. Despite these structural obstacles currently the Trust has two out of fourteen trustees from ethnic minorities. Juliet Prager, Deputy Trust Secretary of the JRCT says: "We realise that it would be better to have a more diverse decision-making body, particularly when we're considering racial justice grants".

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Efforts to make progress in this area have already borne fruit, especially as the JRCT has appointed external experts to a series of committees covering their programme areas which make decisions about which organisations to fund. They are a way of bringing in more ethnic diversity as well as a particular expertise since members are not required to be Quakers. For example, the racial justice committee has five co-opted non-members - all from a black and minority ethnic (BME)¹ background.

The Trust has found a huge amount of enthusiasm when people have been asked to join committees. "I don't think anyone has ever said that they don't want to take part" says Prager: "We make sure they represent the areas of work that we want to fund.

They make decisions about grants. Larger grants have to go to the full board for a formal agreement from them, but recently I don't think the board has ever said 'no'".

These co-opted members attend three committee meetings each year to decide on grants. During these three 'grant rounds' they have to read about ten applications and spend at least one day a year visiting projects. Every year they assess what has been achieved in the last year and look ahead. In some cases they also determine the allocation of funds. For example in the Racial Justice programme, they decide roughly how much of the grant funds available should be allocated to local and to national work. Co-opted members are also involved in setting and revising programme policy. In most respects, co-optees are equal partners with the trustees, although final decisions about grants and policy are taken by the board.

The input of these committees is precious. According to Prager: "The co-opted members have given us a much rounder perspective and much more credibility because we're not a publicly accountable trust in the sense that we're not elected by anyone. Community members know that there are people making decisions about their applications who they may know a little better than the trustees do. In Ireland we advertised openly [for co-optees] and we've been delighted to appoint a traveller² to that committee and that's made a huge difference. We have an immediate connection with what's going on and what the issues are. However, we don't put anyone on the committee who is receiving a grant".



¹ BME denotes 'Black and Minority Ethnic' which is an umbrella term used in the United Kingdom to refer to 'ethnic minorities'.

² Irish travellers are a recognised minority group in Ireland.



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For the last decade, the JRCT has employed Maureen Grant as Development Officer for the West Yorkshire Racial Justice Programme which distributes grants of up to £ 20 000 (GBP) per year for community participation projects. Her office is based in Bradford. She thinks that her African Caribbean background is helpful in forging community links: "I'm the first person that [potential grantees] make contact with. They feel that I understand where they are coming from and that their [request] will be well-represented within the decision making process - even though they are aware that I don't make the decision".

Maureen Grant has been immersed in ethnic minority communities for years and, as such, is able to add to the collective intelligence of the JRCT when deciding on grant applications: "I don't claim to know everything, but I am in a better position" she says. And the strength of her relationships means that organisations will continue to work with the Trust even if they have their grant applications rejected. "I'm based in Bradford and I'm a black person. People know me from before I worked for the Trust so they regard me as one of them and don't necessarily see me as a funder. You work with someone on a project - for instance the destitution project. And their organisation might put in an application for funding and they might or might not get it - but somehow we can continue to work without people feeling that they can't have a relationship with us because their application has not been successful". Grant's appointment has given the JRCT antennae that they would not previously have had. She was able to find out, for instance, that community members felt upset when an organisation that JRCT funds made a post redundant; there was a sense that this organisation was withdrawing support from BME communities. The Trust was able to relay these feelings to the

group, find out why community members were unhappy, and build bridges again. Links with ethnic minority communities have also given the JRCT an understanding of the issues they face - that aren't necessarily picked up by the media - and allow them to pass these messages on to government. "We can pick up the phone and talk to any number of groups we're funding who are working at the cutting edge of thinking and analysis" says Prager, "at election time or when the government brings out a new policy, we're incredibly well informed. For instance, it's very easy for white liberals to get hot under the collar about the activities of the far right and talk about the disenfranchisement of poor white communities. But we're also hearing from our BME colleagues that their perspective shouldn't be forgotten. So we are working very hard on that issue to make sure we have a balanced perspective".

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Prager acknowledges that building a more diverse team can be a difficult task in a charitable trust with such an overwhelmingly white heritage. An organisation with fewer than ten full-time staff can hardly be expected to represent all the rich diversity of people in the UK. Despite that, "in practice when we've monitored it we have found that the groups that we fund are diverse. We would be reluctant to fund people simply because they are from minority ethnic backgrounds. But organisations working as hard as they can to find the best person for the job are getting some amazing people with excellent language skills and multi-faith perspectives".

STAFF DIVERSITY WITHIN FOUNDATIONS AND PROJECTS

EUROPEAN CULTURAL FOUNDATION

The European Cultural Foundation (ECF) is an Amsterdam-based independent non-profit organisation founded by the Swiss philosopher Denis de Rougemont in 1954. With its annual budget of 6-7 million euro, it promotes cultural cooperation across Europe, supports organisations whose work “sheds new light on cultural diversity” and lobbies policy-makers to put culture higher on the political agenda at both a local and European level. Its independence allows it to “take risks, do things differently, and work where others might not go”. The ECF employs about thirty staff from across Europe and beyond, speaking 15 languages in all.

The ECF is engaged in a broad range of activities. Among its flagship programmes are its grants for trans-national cooperation and travel within Europe and its neighbouring areas enabling artists, cultural professionals, journalists and researchers to take part in collaborative projects. They attend cultural networking meetings, artist residences and festivals. It is also the initiator of the Labforculture.org, an information resource on arts and culture in Europe that provides a global platform which includes information on funding opportunities for NGOs, news, analysis and assistance with online networking tools.

The Foundation encourages the mainstreaming of culture within the European Union’s policies and programmes. It also supports cultural development in regions outside of Western Europe lacking social, political and economic stability through supporting individuals and groups and forging partnerships with local administrators and policy-makers.

Mindful of the importance of exploring the processes of change, the ECF published a two-volume book called *Managing Diversity? Art and the Art of Organisational Change*. This collection of essays makes the argument that minorities need to be included in notions of Europe’s historical heritage. The book compiles examples of how the ECF has funded arts initiatives outside of the cultural mainstream primarily through supporting projects dealing with migrant issues and cultural groups mainstreaming diversity. Although originally intended for ECF’s partners and grantees, the publication developed as a reference text for arts and other groups keen to explore diversity.

For more information, see the European Cultural Foundation website: www.eurocult.org

There is currently only one person on the thirteen-member board of the European Cultural Foundation (ECF) from an ethnic minority background. Until recently, they had no such staff members, but this has changed, according to Isabelle Schwarz, who is Head of Cultural Policy Development: “We have no benchmarks for bringing in ethnic minority staff. But we just intentionally recruited somebody with an ethnic minority background whose parents are from Lebanon. Obviously her competency was the first criteria in her selection but her background was a strong asset”. There is, says Schwarz, “no resistance to change internally but it can be really difficult to diversify the composition of board and staff to better represent Europe’s make-up. In the past, people heard the words ‘European Cultural Foundation’ and they felt unsure about applying”.

IT CAN BE REALLY DIFFICULT TO DIVERSIFY THE COMPOSITION OF BOARD AND STAFF TO BETTER REPRESENT EUROPE’S MAKE-UP

Diversity is now incorporated into the foundation’s priority areas of development. The ECF is diversifying its partnerships and consciously approaching organisations that involve people from minority backgrounds who can help give fresh perspectives on how the foundation’s activities should be shaped. It has introduced a benchmark to target 30 per cent of their grants programmes for diversity projects by June 2010. While plans are being developed for an ethnic minority job-shadowing scheme, at present there are no specific benchmarks for ethnic minority staff. Schwarz concedes that there were initial misgivings from staff in 2005 when the foundation embraced diversity in a systematic way: “Some staff were slightly afraid. They wondered, what does this mean in terms

of our jobs? Will I now work on different projects?” But, in the end, she says, it “triggered a lot of in-house discussion that has been very positive. People within the foundation no longer look at diversity as only an abstract topic to read and think about. Now it has substantially impacted our daily work. It is actually alive within our organisation”.

The ECF has also funded a work placement scheme called “Jump in!” which enables ethnic minority artists to broaden their professional networks and to contribute to their organisational work experience in the Netherlands. They have teamed up with the NGOs Kunstenaars & Co and Netwerk CS to provide coaching and career development for artists from migrant communities. An example of this is the support of workshops with underprivileged children from around Europe who have created one-minute videos about their lives which they then share and discuss. A selection of these were screened last summer in Amsterdam at the “Stranger Festival”, Europe’s biggest festival for young video makers.

The ECF is also putting efforts into engaging other organisations in the debate on mainstreaming diversity through special funding and opportunities to encourage others to revise their audience and staffing development policies. Among these, is the ‘Platform for Intercultural Europe’ a flagship project initiated by the ECF and Cultural Action Europe which consists of a vibrant network of nearly 400 human rights, arts and culture, education, anti-discrimination and migration organisations that have pledged to improve their own internal practice on diversity. The Platform’s *Rainbow Paper: from Practice to Policy and Back* sets out a broad agenda, including guiding principles for organisational capacity-building. Demands were made that staff composition and





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governance structures of NGOs become more representative of their societies, that recruitment and training policies should be developed, and that attention should be paid to 'ethnic minority elites' who often play the role of intermediaries to the majority.

The *Rainbow Paper* also includes a pledge to collect effective and inspiring practices to inform policy making from the local to the European level. "We are only at the beginning of the process" says Schwarz, "we cannot see yet how substantial and quickly change will happen". She experienced first-hand the opposition to committing to these principles: "It was quite a big step for some organisations to say yes. There was some reluctance – a sense of 'why should we focus on this. We've already been diverse in any case'". This year, the Platform for Intercultural Europe will devise practical seminars facilitating organisational change of participating organisations so that they better tap into their communities' diversity.

Schwarz says that she has found arts and cultural groups "rather introverted" compared to other sectors despite their impeccably liberal reputation. "Generally, I would say that these organisations often lag behind. If you look at the business sector, it has been much more pro-active in terms of representation. It knows how to reach out. Traditionally artists and cultural professionals have followed their own artistic drives and cultural purposes – it's not about doing business or necessarily reaching out to new audiences although change is also slowly but surely noticeable in this sector".

Internally, the ECF has overhauled its recruitment processes in an attempt to make the staff composition more diverse: "When we call for staff we now try and go for people who either have experience working with migrant communities or are themselves from a migrant background. If you want to change your programme and your funding then you need someone who is sensitive to those changes" says Schwarz: "If we have two applications that are equal quality-wise then it is obvious which one we will go for. Now our job advertisements say that ethnic minority candidates are encouraged. Legally, the wording was a nightmare!" This emphasis on diversity has changed attitudes within the ECF. Schwarz notes: "You become much more sensitive, much more aware about things. Usually foundations address the issue of diversity with some distance, like a subject to be investigated. It's like looking through a lens while being protected behind your glass.

USUALLY FOUNDATIONS ADDRESS THE ISSUE OF DIVERSITY WITH SOME DISTANCE, LIKE A SUBJECT TO BE INVESTIGATED. IT'S LIKE LOOKING THROUGH A LENS WHILE BEING PROTECTED BEHIND YOUR GLASS

While there still is a very long way to go, it's reassuring to discuss the issue with fellow researchers and colleagues as in the EFC's Diversity, Migration Integration Interest Group (DMIIG). You think you have taken only a tiny step and realise that actually, the path is already well worn".

INCLUDING PEOPLE FROM DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS IN SELECTING GRANTS

KING BAUDOUIN FOUNDATION

The Brussels-based King Baudouin Foundation (KBF) is an independent and pluralistic foundation that pursues sustainable ways to bring about justice, democracy and respect for diversity. It was founded in 1976, on the 25th anniversary of King Baudouin's reign.

The foundation addresses the issue of migration by stimulating an informed debate about integration and migration, by strengthening civil society working on these issues, and by contributing to better media attention for migration-related issues. The KBF works in different ways and, besides providing grants to organisations and individuals, also organises conferences, roundtable discussions with experts, leadership programmes, sets up partnerships with diverse stakeholders such as NGOs, research centres, foundations and others.

One of the themes KBF's Integration and Migration programme has focused on are the children of migrants. It has commissioned in-depth studies revealing their poor levels of educational attainment compared to

children without a history of migration. As a result, the foundation currently supports nineteen student tutoring programmes where youth from primary or secondary schools are assigned to mentor and tutor their peers.

The foundation has also tackled wider integration issues including commissioning research about the integration of communities such as Muslims in Belgium and across Europe. By doing this KBF attempts to build acceptance and foster inclusiveness.

The foundation has sixty full-time staff and in 2007 had a budget of around 48 million euro. Funded by donations, legacies and funds set up by individuals, associations and companies, as well as a grant from the Belgian National Lottery, KBF favours partnership models and works regularly with a wide range of institutions including public authorities and other foundations.

For more information, see the King Baudouin Foundation website: www.kbs-frb.be

The King Baudouin Foundation (KBF) is an "independent and pluralistic" foundation, where the diverse backgrounds of the Board of Governors and staff should guarantee representation of the society it serves. For a long time, this diversity referred mainly to people with different political convictions, disciplinary backgrounds, different sectors in society such as the private sector, NGOs, academia, and people from all language communities in the country.

The attainment of diversity in terms of ethnicity and gender constitutes an important goal for KBF. Director Françoise Pissart sees three levels of the foundations' actions in which the full potential of diversity could be attained: Firstly, through its grants; secondly through the committees and juries that advise and assess KBF's grant applications; and thirdly within the foundation through the composition of its board and staff.

OFFICIALLY, WE HAD ALWAYS BEEN OPEN TO INCLUDING PEOPLE FROM MIGRANT BACKGROUNDS, BUT WE HAD NEVER BEEN VERY PROACTIVE ABOUT IT

In the last decade, gender and ethnic diversity have become commonplace concerns in the foundation. Pissart notes an attitudinal change: "When I arrived at the KBF in 1999 we brought in a specialist in gender and a specialist in diversity in general. These diversity specialists had some impact on us as a group. Everyone woke up and said: 'it's important to pay due attention to diversity issues'. Officially, we had always been open to including people from migrant backgrounds, but we had never been very proactive about it".

An area in which, according to Pissart, the KBF has been particularly successful is in attracting more migrants and immigrant organisations to apply for grants. These associations do not only increasingly respond to calls that directly touch upon migration/integration issues, but have also found their way into other domains such as poverty. Pissart notes a clear increase in KBF's funding of projects led by immigrants in the last five years.

A second way in which KBF strives to reflect greater diversity is through its grant selection process. As in many foundations, KBF's Board of Governors decides on the main scope of the foundation's activities, allocates the means available and evaluates the results. But the KBF is highly unusual in that neither its staff nor board directly decide on funding applications. Independent 'juries' of volunteers make their selection at arms length from the foundation - a measure designed to make funding criteria totally impartial. Pissart notes: "At the KBF we rely on external people, we don't select grantees by ourselves. We are convinced that external people and pluralist groups make better decisions than one person on the staff". In the same spirit of neutrality and pluralism, the KBF often also makes use of advisory committees to assist with programmes and projects.

KBF's Board of Directors gives careful consideration to the composition of each and every jury. Diversity is the most important criterion and efforts are made to achieve a balance among gender, sectors, political beliefs and language communities represented on each jury. Furthermore, increasingly, consideration is also given to the inclusion of people from different ethnic backgrounds. KBF believes that if a jury reflects diversity as it exists in society, this richness of experience and background will be reflected in its selection of grants.





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"We believe that including people from an immigrant background in a selection committee is beneficial for the quality and nature of the projects selected" asserts Pissart.

One of the ways in which KBF recruits people for its juries and committees is by working with former and current grantees. For example, leadership programmes targeting people from migrant backgrounds have resulted in the subsequent participation of some of these leaders in juries and committees. In this way the consideration of diversity in one area, namely the projects supported by the foundation, helps to achieve diversity in another, namely the composition of juries and committees.

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With regards to achieving more diversity within the foundation staff, here Pissart is candid about the challenges they face: "Ethnic minorities don't seem to find a way to the KBF on their own. So even if we go through the normal recruitment channels including informing associations that we are recruiting staff, very few come forward from ethnic minority backgrounds".

There are several obstacles to overcome in creating a more diverse work force. To understand why insufficient numbers of people apply for these

positions, she points for example to the fact that many are not plugged into social networks which would naturally bring them to the foundation world. Pissart argues that there are no issues of cultural acceptance to address internally since when faced with a more diverse workforce – albeit on a temporary basis – the experience within the foundation has been positive.

Pissart states that the KBF is at this point in time not considering adopting quotas or targets for the number of ethnic minorities: "I don't think forcing staff or the board to be more representative through a quota system would be the best way to do it". Moreover, in Belgium there are different attitudes towards diversity. In the French community, there is a reluctance to have special policies targeting people of immigrant background, fearing that such an approach might stigmatise immigrants. While in the Flemish community, a more Anglo-Saxon approach exists where specific programmes are more widely supported. It is self-evident that in a Foundation such as KBF, that brings together the two communities, these different approaches are represented.

So far, KBF has not undertaken attempts to document how their improved understanding of diversity has made a difference in their work. But Pissart is confident that the fact of working with a more diverse group of people, and hence reflecting the society in a more realistic way, is improving the results of the foundation.

THE IMPACT OF DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS ON A GIVING SCHEME

FREUDENBERG STIFTUNG

The Freudenberg Foundation is an independent foundation based in Weinheim Germany. Established in 1984 by the Freudenberg family, it develops and disseminates projects that “strengthen democratic culture” and find solutions to “social discrimination and lack of recognition”. The foundation works in Germany, Israel, Hungary, South-East Europe, Bulgaria and Romania. Programme areas include: integration, youth between school and working life, democratic culture, and work for the mentally ill. All of their initiatives are designed to fill gaps left by the state.

A staff of nine and an annual budget of 2.8 million euro makes this a relatively small organisation but its ‘field of operations’ is quite large. This is primarily the case as it usually operates in partnership and therefore its work is co-funded by municipalities, state authorities, the European Commission, the Council of Europe and, above all, other foundations. Freudenberg Foundation funds local projects and experiments to find successful models that can be disseminated to policy-makers for replication elsewhere.

Since its establishment, the Freudenberg Foundation has been particularly interested in the integration of children and young people from immigrant families. Their activities range from helping teenagers with an immigrant background do better at school, to improving their language skills, or to finding an apprenticeship. Projects are designed so that families are assisted and parents participate over an extended period of time helping their children develop their potential through the course of their education. A secondary aim is to highlight the special qualifications and contributions of migrants in education and in the workplace so that this is better understood in the wider community and especially within the German media. And finally, since this programming is undertaken in cities, there is a clear intention to strengthen the sense of community and belonging in the areas where they are based.

For more information, see the Freudenberg Foundation website: www.freudenbergstiftung.de

The Freudenberg Foundation has established forty-six programmes across Germany to integrate young migrants, the largest group of which are of Turkish origin. Changes to German law now give Turkish ‘guest workers’ and their families a route towards citizenship but there still remain significant problems with acquiring German language skills and in integrating successfully into society. This is an on-going issue that continues to effect new generations.

MY QUESTION IS ALWAYS HOW CAN MIGRANT VOICES HOPE THAT THEY WILL BE LISTENED TO?

Christian Petry, Executive Director of the Foundation, says: “The most socially excluded are definitely Arabs and Turks. One has to be aware that a third of the students in a city like Stuttgart are born to young women who came to Germany without any knowledge of German. My question is always how can migrant voices hope that they will be listened to? Whether in kindergarten, school, in the public, and in the foundation as well”.

One of the main initiatives of the Freudenberg Foundation is a “Rucksack” scheme in which three to six year old migrant children and their parents (mostly mothers) learn everyday German vocabulary in kindergarten with the aid of bilingual assistants. The assistants are themselves mothers trained in the methods of bilingual language acquisition. They put vocabulary words on note cards in the children’s rucksack to take home to their families over a period of nine months. At home the children practice this vocabulary in their native language through games and nursery rhymes.

This project helps to bridge the gap between families and educational institutions. It also assists parents to see where and how they can contribute to the well-being and the education of their children. This then helps provide a road for the development of the mothers, who can be trained either as para-professional teacher assistants, or if they advance further, can also become kindergarten teachers themselves. It is important to help them along this path as today there are very few teachers of Turkish origin: “It is only now that the second generation of Turks living in Germany are becoming teachers” says Petry. Mothers are invited once a year by government ministers to develop a parent’s conference to discuss their needs. “Our long term aim is to help them develop so that they can join the staff” says Christian Petry.

Petry believes that migrants themselves should be included at every stage of the foundation’s work: “The staff is so small that a broader group of people participate in our decisions. We have to build a system with our projects where we can’t act without listening to [ethnic minorities]”. The Foundation sits down with the bilingual language assistants several times a year to discuss strategies. This forum does not discuss grants, which are decided annually or bi-annually. But it is an opportunity to give feedback on the projects: “We try to react to the problems they tell us about” continues Petry. “We don’t have a lot of funds, but we explain the funds which are available and work with them to help access resources and to get public money”.





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Though the government has supported the 'Rucksack' initiative through an annual meeting between the German Migration Minister and Turkish mothers, there are nevertheless some tensions. State and regional bureaucracies are aware that they need to bridge the gap between parents and educational institutions, says Petry. But they are "afraid to give people powerful jobs" for competitive reasons, since they are treading on turf normally occupied by civil servants.

The foundation has listened to migrants through a project called "One Square Mile of Education". This project tries to integrate all the kindergartens, schools and other institutions that are involved in the educational process in Berlin - from in the first year of school to vocational training - so that problems can be recognised as early as possible. They seek ways in which they can exchange information and work together so that there are no gaps in the process of education through which children can fall. The programme runs a 'pedagogic laboratory' - a regular meeting place for all those involved, and provides workshops for teachers. The project started last September and will run for ten years. "One Square Mile is the important result of listening to their voices" says Petry: "The project was given its name because of all the Empires/boxes you find in local administration. To overcome this we have to become very community-based and reduce the focus to the square mile in which schools operate. And then pressure the departments to cooperate".

Like the JRCT, Freudenberg Foundation have recruited two individuals of migrant origin to join their nine-strong Board of Directors. The only professor for education

in Germany of Turkish origin and a senior bureaucrat with Bosnian origins were both sought out to serve in this governance capacity. "Perhaps we are the only board where a young Bosnian sits next to a Protestant Bishop" says Petry: "But we have not yet succeeded in having a mother [of Turkish origin] join the board".

One out of eight members of staff is from a migrant background, and Petry hopes that even the most senior job will be taken up by a migrant: "The aim is that we will some day have an Executive Director of the foundation who is from an ethnic minority. We tried to find a candidate but it has been impossible because they haven't met the criteria. But we are open to finding someone whom we will help develop into the position".

**THE AIM IS THAT WE WILL SOME DAY
HAVE AN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF
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AN ETHNIC MINORITY**

Petry is adamant that including migrants in the foundation's decision-making has given them a far greater insight into how public services are used. One of the foundation's aspirations is to find 'innovation gaps' where state bureaucracies are not providing services as efficiently as they should. "It is so much easier to identify not only attitudes but structural deficits, gaps, and areas for integration if you are really close to migrants. You find out more about what kinds of services exist and better understand how many services don't actually adequately meet the needs of those people".

GRANTMAKING IN DIVERSE COMMUNITIES AND POLICY MAKING

FUNDAÇÃO CALOUSTE GULBENKIAN

The Gulbenkian Foundation is an independent Portuguese foundation that was founded in 1956 by Calouste Gulbenkian, an Armenian born in Turkey who became a British citizen. Its aims are as cosmopolitan as Gulbenkian's biography: it brings different cultures and nationalities together in the fields of arts, charity, education and science. It also fosters co-operation with Portuguese-speaking African countries and East Timor in supporting their millennium goals, promotes Portuguese culture abroad, and operates a programme to preserve evidence of the Portuguese presence in the world and to give cultural support to the Armenian Diaspora.

The foundation also promotes a wide range of programmes and projects that contribute to overcoming particular needs and to finding answers to key issues within its four areas of action: the Arts, Charity, Education and Science. The foundation

pursues its statutory aims in Portugal, London, and Paris through a wide range of direct activities, grants supporting projects and programmes. It organises international conferences, meetings and courses, awards subsidies and scholarships for specialist studies and doctorates in Portugal and abroad, and supports scientific, educational, artistic and social projects.

As one of the largest foundations in Europe, the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation is able to foster work that they describe as "adventurous and inspiring". The Gulbenkian Foundation has 522 employees and an annual budget of over one billion euro. There is no compiled information on the ethnic background of Gulbenkian employees. Currently, none of the Board of Directors is from an ethnic minority background.

For more information, see the Gulbenkian Foundation website: www.gulbenkian.pt

The Gulbenkian Foundation gives grants to a vast array of international programmes including supporting educational and science scholarships, the training in Portugal of doctors from former Portuguese African colonies, and research into neglected tropical diseases. However, it does not give any grants out on an ethnic minority basis.

At the turn of the millennium, the Gulbenkian Foundation undertook a reassessment of its core grantmaking work. It decided to expand beyond its traditional brief in arts and education to meet more urgent social issues facing the country. Following staffing changes, a decision was taken to increase activities in three thematic areas: the ageing population, children at risk, and migration issues. "Migration was a particularly interesting choice because immigrants are a relatively new phenomenon for Portugal" says Luisa Valle, Director of the Gulbenkian Human Development Programme: "Previously we had been primarily a country which people migrated from. These immigration flows were largely a post-revolutionary phenomenon (1974) and therefore quite new for us". Valle charts the recent history of migration from one in which *émigrés* arriving from Africa and speaking Portuguese integrated 'relatively well' to a more troubled situation now, where there have been integration difficulties with second generation Africans. "In the beginning we had *émigrés* from Africa who spoke Portuguese. Their integration went relatively well with few serious problems. The difficulties have come with their children".

Following the arrival of immigrants from Eastern and Central Europe at the end of the 1990s, the foundation made a conscious choice to develop a positive image of all migrants by helping them to

fill skills gaps in the medical field. "We knew that many of those newly arrived from Eastern Europe, Ukraine, Moldavia and Russia had trained at home" says Valle: "We hoped that if they developed careers in areas that would have an immediate positive impact on society, we would bring public opinion on migration around".

In 2001, the foundation established a support project for 120 legally residing immigrant doctors from different parts of the world that enabled them to pass an 'equivalency exam' ensuring that their skills were at the same standard as those who had been trained in Portugal. They were provided with language training, a stipend to cover living expenses, and a special agreement with government authorities to ensure that they maintained their legal status while they studied. Of the initial group, 107 passed their exams and are now working in the National Health Service across Portugal. Some have even switched to other areas of medicine where there is an even greater need. Valle comments that: "The project has been a real success, public opinion has been very positive and government authorities are pleased. We are monitoring their progress to see if they are integrating more quickly than migrants normally do. In fact, they are following some Portuguese patterns like looking for jobs near the major cities and the coast line and buying, not renting, their own houses. Socially they are a mixed group. Overall, they have been accepted even by those parts of the population which are more conservative".

WE HOPED THAT IF THEY DEVELOPED CAREERS IN AREAS THAT WOULD HAVE AN IMMEDIATE POSITIVE IMPACT ON SOCIETY, WE WOULD BRING PUBLIC OPINION ON MIGRATION AROUND



© Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian

The Gulbenkian Foundation replicated this project from 2005 to 2007. In its latest iteration, the target group was nurses. By 2008 they had initiated a new project for doctors fully financed by the Health Ministry. However, their work has now shifted from assisting highly skilled professionals to the broader unskilled migrant population.

The foundation has also worked with children from disadvantaged suburbs of Lisbon, working with local authorities and NGOs to encourage them to attend school and complete their studies. Though these projects are not specifically targeted at migrant groups, they are situated in areas comprised of more than fifty per cent migrants. These programmes include mandatory school alternative curricula and after school activities such as developing a youth symphonic orchestra, judo, dance and visual arts, as well as help with homework and other activities as part of an effort to occupy children and teenagers who have nowhere else to go.

These projects demonstrate the Gulbenkian Foundation's chosen approach: to follow a project from its conception to the evaluation stage in collaboration with a partner. This then might create a best practice model that can later be disseminated to other stakeholders.

Luisa Valle thinks that these funding decisions have had a significant, if intangible, impact on Portuguese public opinion: "I know that we are still living in a country where people from diverse backgrounds are not yet 'visible' in the public eye. We don't have many non-Portuguese in the press or on TV or in many other areas. But now they are becoming better represented in the health sector. It is a start and an example of how strategic grant giving and innovation can make positive inroads into societal problems".

Valle considers that "The diversity of today's societies will necessarily end up reflected not only in foundations' activities but also within their staff composition".



CONCLUSION

This publication can be seen as a significant outcome of the Diversity, Migration and Integration Interest Group (DMIIG) of European Foundation Centre (EFC) and I would like to commend the EFC, DMIIG and Karen Weisblatt for bringing this great initiative to fruition. It is published by the EFC at a crucial moment. European foundations have in general not been in the forefront of the discussion about race, ethnicity and equal participation as it pertains to the composition of their staff and boards. It is extremely important that European foundations take the issue of diversity seriously and that they move from a position of ignoring or merely being defensive to acknowledging the power and opportunities provided by diversity. As foundations are supposed to serve the public benefit, they have to take here a special responsibility. I hope that the wonderful work, as described in the case studies by the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, European Cultural Foundation, King Baudouin Foundation, Freudenberg Foundation and the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation will be a source of inspiration for other European foundations.

To make a strong case for the foundation sector advancing diversity and giving it a high priority, one has to use the right arguments. It would not help if foundations were to adopt the issue of diversity merely on the ground that the outside world sees it as important and expects foundations to live up to this expectation. It is also not a powerful case if foundations would embrace the issue just because of government regulation and affirmative action programmes; it could even be counterproductive. There ought to be a genuine buy-in instead of tokenism. My hope and expectation is that foundations combine the moral imperative with the right arguments and thereby live up to what our societies want foundations to do. Combining the moral

imperative with making a strong business case is better than the moral imperative alone.

Let us therefore assess some of the arguments and separate the wheat from the chaff. In making the case for diversity, I realise that there are multiple perspectives, as there are many different stakeholders involved. For instance an argument in favour of diversity can be weak from the perspective of the staff and board of foundations but strong from the perspective of the general public. Let me mention the argument that the composition of staff and board of a foundation in terms of ethnic background should reflect the society to which it belongs. Obviously it can be complicated to achieve this objective in each and any organisation and I therefore can understand the argument by foundations that they should have more flexibility in filling positions and that dogmatism should be avoided. Not every micro cosmos should in a rigid way reflect the macro cosmos. However from the perspective of the public and the potential grantees, ethnic diversity can be seen as a great advantage. If people see their own ethnic background being represented on the staff and board of a foundation, it may help to lower the institutional threshold and facilitate easy access to such a foundation. In addition it may also be seen as positive, when ethnic diversity creates role models that are important for ethnic minorities. Finally foundations should, while avoiding dogmatism, be more representative of the societies they are part of.

Let me comment on one other argument relating to diversity. The promotion of diversity can be seen in terms of the composition of the foundation and it can be seen in terms of the nature of the foundation's programme. In the latter case diversity can be reflected in the foundation supporting separate and dedicated diversity projects or

diversity can come in as a dimension of projects across the board of the foundation's programme. Furthering diversity in the foundation's organisation and programme are often seen as being related to each other: diversity in the organisation would contribute to diversity of the programme. However it is here that we have to bring in a nuance. The two sides will in my opinion not necessarily reinforce each other: having a diverse staff will not automatically imply that the ethnic groups represented will gain in attention on the side of grant making and operating programmes. The opposite may be true. Staff with a specific ethnic background do not want to be seen as representative of a group but would like to be appreciated in their own right. In order to avoid that the impression occurs that someone with a certain background will pay more attention to the situation of his peers, he may even avoid in a slightly exaggerated way to be seen as a representative of an ethnic group. It even is questionable whether people from a certain ethnic group - assuming they did want to serve their peers - would be in the best position to do so; or whether proximity to the situation would make them myopic to serve the interests of their peers. If people are appointed as representatives of a group, it could be self defeating for the furtherance of specific group interest and in addition you may lose these 'representatives' sooner or later - which actually would be a reflection of their quality.

Having said this there is a positive relation between diversity in the organisation and diversity of the programme, but it has to be lifted to a higher level of conceptualisation. For me the single most important argument in favour of diversity is that heterogeneous groups are likely to deliver better results than homogeneous groups, even though the latter assumes an effective organisational bonding of the various sub-groups. With a diversity of opinions around the table one gets to better decisions. Obviously the diversity in terms of ethnic background is not a guarantee for diverse opinions and higher quality decisions but at least one enhances the odds. Moreover higher quality decisions by foundations are required more than ever, precisely

because of the fact that our societies have become more complex and diverse. For me this observation is unrelated to the mission and specific programme of a foundation.

Personally I believe that the notion that heterogeneous groups deliver better results than homogeneous groups is a particularly important one for the foundation world, as it compensates somewhat for the lack of accountability that foundations have to their environment. Fortunately the selection of the actual activities of foundations is not the result of a process of democratic elections. However this also implies that a lot of 'power' is vested in the management and particularly the staff of foundations. Diversity, not in the last place ethnic diversity, as an important parameter in recruiting staff, provides a protection against insular thinking by foundations. It will provide a positive stimulus for more multidimensional approaches and will help us to do our job better.

Recently a report about 'Diversity and Inclusion' was published by Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors (RPA) in New York and the Council on Foundations in Washington DC - with the support of the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. It is not a coincidence that on both sides of the Atlantic attention is paid to the diversity issue. As a Board member of both RPA and EFC I realise that all foundations should be leading on moral issues and issues of effective grantmaking.

I call upon my colleagues in Europe to continue the debate in the foundation sector and their individual foundations; to come up with inclusive practices, and to showcase to their national and international peers the power of diversity for the mission, the organisation and the programmes of foundations.

RIEN VAN GENDT

Governing Council Member, European Foundation Centre
Chair, Dutch Association of Foundations
Board Member, Bernard van Leer Foundation

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ABOUT THE EUROPEAN FOUNDATION CENTRE

The European Foundation Centre is an international association of foundations and corporate funders dedicated to creating an enabling legal and fiscal environment for foundations, documenting the foundation landscape, strengthening the infrastructure of the sector, and promoting collaboration, both among foundations and between foundations and other actors, to advance the public good in Europe and beyond.

The EFC's Diversity, Migration and Integration Interest Group (DMIIG) is the hub for EFC activity on issues relating to diversity, migration and migrant integration.

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ABOUT THE BARROW CADBURY TRUST

Established in 1920, the Barrow Cadbury Trust is an independent charitable foundation, committed to supporting vulnerable and marginalised people in society. The Trust provides grants to grassroots voluntary and community groups working in deprived communities in Britain and abroad. It also works with researchers, think tanks and government, often in partnership with other grant-makers, seeking to overcome the structural barriers to a more just and equal society.

Since 2006, the Barrow Cadbury Trust has acted as chair of the EFC DMIIG.

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